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Authoritarian Federalism in the Dock: A Historical Comparison between the Ethiopia-Eritrea Federation and the Tanganyika-Zanzibar Union

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Abstract

This article makes an extended analytical comparison between the Ethiopia-Eritrea Federation and the Tanganyika-Zanzibar Union to illuminate their common and uncommon aspects. In explaining the greater longevity of the Tanzania Union, it notes the hegemonic character of the Ethiopian regime itself as the main reason leading to the collapse of the Federation in the Horn. In contrast, the structures of the Tanganyikan state allowed greater cooptation of pro-Union Zanzibari political forces in the wake of the events commonly known as the Zanzibar Revolution of 1964, which had violently suppressed the anti-unionist political forces in Zanzibar. In both cases, Western Powers played pivotal background roles in supporting Ethiopia and Tanganyika in imposing their respective federal arrangements over Eritrea and Zanzibar. The article traces the constitutional and political centralization that catalysed the emergence of the nationalist movements in Eritrea and Zanzibar. It argues that Zanzibari nationalism, like its Eritrean counterpart, must be understood on its own terms without reference to outside powers and regions.

Towards a Comparative Framework of Federal Unions in Africa

Speaking on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the Tanzania Union of April 1964 in the Amani National Stadium in Zanzibar, President Benjamin Mkapa called for the Union to be maintained at all costs. He said that, as in any marriage or community, problems were inevitable, but solutions must be found that consolidated Tanzania's unity: "our union is a demonstration that where there is a way there is a political will; Africans can unite."[1] The two former sovereign states sealed their union following the departure of the British colonial authorities in 1964. The Union has outlasted huge political change, not least the move away from a single party socialist system to a multiparty capitalist system. Yet throughout the 1970s and thereafter, a growing number of Zanzibaris began to view the 1964 Union with the Tanzania mainland as an instrument to preserve the economic status quo by keeping the Isles politically prostrate. Consequently, there were growing political tensions as most dramatically revealed in the bloody protests mounted in the wake of the 2000 General

[1] BBC news report 'Tanzania marks 40th birthday,' 26 April 2004. www.bbc.co.uk news

Elections on Zanzibar.[2] Given the economic and political problems confronting Zanzibar, and for that matter Tanzania, the 40th anniversary of the Tanzania Union should give one pause for reflection rather than celebration, especially with the 2005 General Elections looming.

Contemporary Zanzibar comprises approximately one million inhabitants roughly divided among the two primary islands: Unguja and Pemba. Unguja is 640 square miles, 53 miles long and approximately 24 miles across and lies just off the coast of Dar es Salaam. Pemba, situated across from the city of Tanga, near the Kenyan border, lies at a distance of 25 miles to the north east of Unguja and has an area of 380 square miles, being 42 miles long and roughly 14 miles across. Pre-European colonial Zanzibar was dominated by Oman, with most Zanzibaris being Bantu Swahili speakers with some Persian and mainly Arab foreign influence.[3] Zanzibar was initially an Omani colony and later an independent Arab state. It was also an imperial state under the Sultan due to its possessions on the East African mainland coast itself.

Zanzibar thus had a more distinct national identity than Italian Eritrea, in part due to its relative isolation as island archipelagos, and in part forged by Omani colonialism and the diffusion of Sunni Islam among the vast majority of the Isles' population prior to British colonialism. Agriculture and, to a lesser extent fishing, were the main subsistence activities of the Isles' inhabitants. Zanzibar also served as a conduit between the Indian Ocean trading networks and the African hinterland, dealing in slaves, spices and ivory. In 1890, Great Britain reached an agreement with the Sultan to create a protectorate. In 1914, Britain tightened its control over the Sultan's government, first by replacing the position of Consul-General with that of British Resident, as well as designating the Governor of Kenya colony as the High Commissioner of Zanzibar (Lofchie 1965: 53, 55, 58). Turning to Tanganyika, little is known of its history prior to the 19th century. Only the coast had a literary culture with surviving records. Further inland there was no powerful state to preserve elaborate oral traditions. Because political organization was not very centralized among the different ethnic groups, coordinated resistance against German military and commercial penetration was very limited (Iliffe 1969). Germany lost Tanganyika to Great Britain at the end of World War I. Tanganyika subsequently became a British mandated territory under the League of Nations. On 9 December 1961

[2] For a study of the 2000 Zanzibar election, see G. Cameron (2002).

[3] A present day Zanzibari peasant's forebears in the time of Augustan Rome would have been Bantu peasants in West Africa and Berber nomads in the Arabian peninsula (Clayton 1981: 1).

Tanganyika achieved independence. In April 1964, the Republic of Tanganyika and the People's Republic of Zanzibar united to form the United Republic of Tanganyika and Zanzibar (soon to be called Tanzania later in 1964). Since then this unique experiment in African unity has had a turbulent history. Studies on African federalism have sought to analyze the problems of national integration within the context of ethno-religious and cultural pluralism. Drawing on the experiences of other federal arrangements, a recent work explores whether federalism is a conflict-preventing mode of governance and an effective system of power sharing among regional and nationality groups in countries such as Nigeria, South Africa and Ethiopia (Gana and Egwu 2004). Unique to Tanganyika and Zanzibar, however, is that the 1964 Union was made between two hitherto sovereign states that subsequently adopted a (semi)federal model of constitutional government. It is the sole remaining union between two hitherto sovereign states in contemporary Africa.

In exploring the problems inherent in the Tanganyika-Zanzibar Union, this article employs a comparative framework in light of another ill-fated and long defunct African political federation: the Ethiopia-Eritrea Federation (1952-1962).[4] Admittedly, important differences stand out between these two cases, some of which bear a brief mention. Contemporary Eritrea numbers approximately four million inhabitants located in the Sahelian part of North-Eastern Africa. In contrast to Zanzibar, colonial Eritrea's peoples were diverse, comprising Nilotic, Hamitic and later Semitic peoples. Pre-European colonial Eritrea had never existed as one entity. Furthermore, there were two primary modes of economy among Eritrea's peoples, highland agriculture and lowland pastoralism, generally coinciding with the Christian and Moslem populations, respectively. Furthermore, during the 19th century, prior to the era of Italian colonialism (1890-1941), a hegemonic Abyssinian empire jostled for control of Eritrea against European powers and other regional powers like Egypt and the Ottoman Empire. Significantly, at the time of Federation the ruling classes of the modern Ethiopian state largely derived from the 19th century Abyssinian highland kingdom, which meant that there was potentially a more hegemonic expansionist intent towards Eritrea given the earlier history of the Ethiopian state. Haile Sellassie's kingdom contained approximately 50 ethnic groups with particularly large groupings in the Oromo and Amhara peoples (30 and 10 million respectively), and which lead to perceived ethnic group dominance by the latter. In contrast, Tanganyika had never comprised a single pre-European kingdom contiguous with the German

[4] As will be clear below, the author is in sympathy with those legal scholars who argue that the Union between Tanganyika and Zanzibar was 'federal' (three governments) and not 'unitary' (one government) in nature. I therefore consider both cases to be constitutionally comparable.

colonial territory and thus had a weaker national self-consciousness in regards to its neighbour Zanzibar at the time of the Union. This was due in good part to the fact that Tanganyika had approximately 120 relatively small-sized ethnic groups (the Chagga and the Sukuma being among the larger groupings). Thus issues around ethnic dominance of the postcolonial state did not have a significant impact on Tanzanian national politics.

Despite the above differences, there are broad similarities worthy of examination, which I explore in more detail in the main body of the article. Both federations occurred in post-WWII East Africa in the 1950s and 1960s. Moreover, Ethiopia and Tanganyika initiated their respective unions with the backing of Western powers. And domestically both the Sellassie and Nyerere regimes actively allied themselves with pro-unionist forces within the deeply divided societies of Eritrea and Zanzibar. Additionally, in both Ethiopia and Tanganyika, there was a vast population imbalance, roughly 20-30 to 1, vis-à-vis Eritrea and Zanzibar. Both federations, moreover, were legally flawed and became increasingly centralized. In fact, there appears to have been a symbiosis between Ethiopia and Tanzania in seeking to contain the nationalist challenges mounted in Eritrea and Zanzibar.

The comparative method involves the presentation of empirical evidence in an attempt to compare systematically and explicitly political phenomena (Mackie and Marsh 1995: 174). Commonly, comparison in political science is across countries. Less commonly, the comparative method is employed across time. This article seeks to do both. It compares and contrasts across countries and time in order to help explain their generic qualities and to improve our understanding of what went wrong in the case of the Ethiopia-Eritrean Federation and what the prospects are for the Tanzania Union.

If evidence from the 10 year Ethiopia-Eritrea Federation does illuminate general patterns in the 40-year Tanzania Union, then how does one explain the greater longevity of the latter federal arrangement? Pivotal in contrasting Eritrea's relationship with feudal Ethiopia vis-à-vis the longer institutional life-span of the Zanzibar-Tanganyika constitutional relationship are two inter-related phenomena: (i) the brutal suppression of Zanzibari nationalist forces in 1964; and (ii) Zanzibar's political absorption into the corporatist and democratic structures of the post-1964 Tanzanian state. Yet, regardless of Tanzania's more favourable circumstances for federal union compared to Haile Sellassie's Ethiopia, the Tanzania Union finds itself on increasingly shaky foundations. For with the end of the Cold War, the collapse of Tanzanian socialism, the

ascendancy of neo-liberalism, and the introduction of multiparty politics, a resurgent Zanzibari nationalism presently struggles for a new constitutional dispensation on the 1964 Tanzania Union. Indeed, despite the more conducive conditions for a successful federal arrangement in Tanzania, among these being the unity of the Swahili language, a relatively more peaceful political culture, a less hegemonic ruling class in the immediate post-union phase, and a long-established Zanzibari nationalist tradition, there remain similar structural weaknesses in the Tanzanian regime that share parallels with the earlier Ethiopian regime. An over-developed state, weak judicial structures, and the absence of an opting out clause for the federal arrangement itself, are subjecting Zanzibar to similar pressures of incorporation that Eritrea experienced many decades ago. The primary lesson Eritrean nationalists may draw from the growing strife within the Tanganyika-Zanzibar relationship is essentially a negative one: no matter the legal structures and processes promulgated by international law, and no matter the conjuncture of Eritrean domestic class and social forces at the time, and their degree of unity, the Ethiopia-Eritrea Federation was marked for extinction right from its beginning in 1952.

Social Classes at the Federal Conjuncture

Eritrea and Zanzibar were deeply divided societies on the eve of decolonisation from European powers. This section sketches the nature of these divisions as well as the alliances established between neighbouring Ethiopia and Tanganyika and the pro-unionist political parties in Eritrea and Zanzibar, respectively. Pro-unionist parties commanded roughly half of the popular support for some kind of political arrangement with the neighbouring power. Yet in the case of both Eritrea and Zanzibar there was never a clear mandate for a federal union. The main difference between Eritrea and Zanzibar concerned the way in which the extreme violence of 1964 catapulted Zanzibar into the arms of the Tanganyikan state and its US ally. Eritrea's incorporation followed a UN process due to its contested status as a former Italian colony. But the forces were similar in that Ethiopia, backed by the US, sought a federal union for Eritrea, short of its earlier primary objective of outright annexation.

After the Italian defeat of 1941, Eritrea came under British administration until 1952. During this period, Eritreans waged an intense struggle over the future of the former colony. The conflict was precipitated and aggravated by Ethiopia's claim to annex Eritrea (Markakis 1988: 52). In an attempt to strengthen pro-Unionist forces, the Ethiopian Emperor stirred up anti-colonial feelings (Italian and British) among Eritreans by exposing the cruelties of alien occupation (Kinfe

Abraham 1994: 135). Institutional religion also contributed to the schisms within Eritrean society, with the Christian clergy calling for union with Ethiopia. Opposition to union with Ethiopia and support for Eritrean independence came initially from the Muslim community (Markakis 1988: 52). Political forces were not merely based on religion, however, for social class also played a role as to how certain social forces viewed Eritrea's future (Markakis 1988: 52). The large pro-independence Muslim trader community had a stranglehold on trade with the Eritrean plateau and Ethiopia, and not surprisingly were alarmed by Ethiopia's claim to Eritrea (Markakis 1988: 52). Many pro-union Christian leaders, in contrast to the Muslim elite, saw a link with Ethiopia as a way to cement their influence in Ethiopian-affiliated Eritrea (Markakis 1988: 52). Whatever the balance between religion and social class, most observers concur that Christian/Muslim divisions weakened the incipient nationalist movement (Jordan Gebre-Medhin 1989: 72-106; Pool 2001: 36-47; Trevaskis 1960: 46-80).[5]

Eritrea's immediate future was not resolved until 1952 when the UN voted for a federal formula (Semere Haile 1988: 20-21). Eritrea was envisioned to constitute an autonomous unit federated with Ethiopia under the sovereignty of the Ethiopian crown. Thus through a United Nations-sponsored compromise, Eritrea became self-governing in 1952 within a federal union with Ethiopia. Though short of an absolute majority, the Unionists won the larger number of seats, and were able to form a government with their Muslim allies in the chamber. Tedla Bairu, secretary-general of the Unionist Party, was elected president of the Eritrean Assembly, while Ali Mohammed Mussa Radai, leader of the Muslim League of the Western Province, became vice-president. Their opponents also had a substantial number of seats, and were willing to cooperate. The pro-British and the pro-Ethiopian supporters immediately formed a two-thirds majority and formerly ratified the Federal Act and the Eritrean Constitution on 10 July 1952, to be shortly ratified by Haile Sellasie. The Federation of Eritrea and Ethiopia became effective on 15 September 1952 (Semere Haile 1988: 26). The Ethiopian government promised to honour the provisions of the Federal Act and the autonomy of Eritrea as drawn up by the General Assembly. As Markakis states: "It was an auspicious start, complete with a model constitution, elections, a free press, and a budding trade-union movement; all in stark contrast to the feudal regime across the border in Ethiopia" (53). Left unclear however was the means of establishing the federal framework as well

[5] The other significant colonial era parties in Eritrea were the Liberal Progressive Party (favouring Eritrean independence with the annexation of Tigray) and the Pro-Italia Party (favouring Italian trusteeship).

as the clear delineation of the functions of the different federal institutions (Semere Haile 1988: 26-27).

Whilst in Eritrea the nationalist movement was fractured by class and religion, the Zanzibar struggle was characterized by class and racial fault lines within mainly Muslim Zanzibar. The nature of Zanzibar's agrarian political economy is central to an understanding of its pre-independence nationalist politics. The agrarian experience of Omani colonialism differed between Unguja and Pemba. For Unguja, Omani colonialism confined the peasantry to remote coastal areas of poor quality soil while compelling it to work on Arab plantations, initially as forced labourers and later as agricultural proletariat. Crucially, the descendents of slaves and many Christian migrants from the mainland, arriving as plantation labour, would comprise a significant and staunch pro-Unionist constituency. On Pemba, the greater abundance of fertile soils buffeted land alienation somewhat. Moreover, the introduction of cloves in the late 19th century provided lucrative opportunities for a Pemba peasant smallholder movement to emerge, a class which was in less conflict with the Arab planters than their Unguja peasant counterparts.

Nationalist politics emerged gradually in line with legislative, judicial and executive reforms undertaken by the British. Nonetheless the decolonisation process in Zanzibar witnessed deep divisions within the nationalist movement. The first direct elections held in the region occurred in Zanzibar in 1957, and in Tanganyika in 1958. Tanganyika, under Julius Nyerere, reached nationhood in a constitutionally peaceful process under the firm hegemony of the Tanganyika African Nationalist Union (TANU).[6] The three nationalist parties of note on the eve of decolonisation in Zanzibar were the Afro-Shirazi Party (ASP) led by Abeid Karume, the Zanzibar Nationalist Party (ZNP) led by Ali Mushin, the Zanzibar and Pemba People's Party (ZPPP) led by Mohammed Shamte, and later, the *Umma* (the Masses) Party led by Abdulrahman Babu. The ASP, ZNP and ZPPP precursors were ethnic associations, while the Umma Party represented a leftist breakaway faction from the ZNP. No single charismatic leader emerged among the competing Zanzibar parties, at least none who could unite all anti-colonial forces in a broad nationalist movement. Instead, intense and bitter competition between the ZNP and the ASP characterized the colonial elections. The ASP's social base comprised African urban workers (especially harbour stevedores and domestics, many of whom were Christians with links to Tanganyika), the African Association, and the Unguja section of the Shirazi

[6] Nationalist sentiment in Tanganyika, never as strong as in Zanzibar, may in fact be described as a nationalist 'moment' rather than a nationalist 'movement'.

Association (based in large degree on the Unguja peasantry). The ZNP's social base on Unguja was the Arab plantation class in western Unguja, together with the civil service and Stone Town dwelling elite. On Pemba, the majority of the peasantry opted for the ZNP, or the ZPPP. The contest centred on the ZNP and ASP trying to win the hearts and minds of the indigenous peasantry. The pro-Arab ZNP[7] could not make headway on Unguja, nor could the anti-Arab racialism of the ASP make inroads in Pemba where there were fewer Africans. Crucially the ZPPP failed to chart a course independent of either the ASP or ZNP and formed an alliance with the latter, especially after the defection of the Unguja Shirazi Association to the ASP. The preference of Pemban clove growers for the ZPPP/ZNP coalition may have been a response to the programme of the ASP, which sought land redistribution in favour of 'Africans,' a possible threat to their farms. Not surprisingly, Pemban clove owners gravitated to the ZNP programme, which offered no significant land reform to the poorer peasants. More generally, like in colonial Eritrea vis-à-vis Christian-dominated Ethiopia, large segments of the Muslim community, prosperous to some extent in the trade sector, feared potential Christian domination by the Tanganyikan state. The failure of the nationalist parties to resolve such a monumental impasse led to social disaster. The ZNP/ZPPP won the 1963 election based on constituency seats, though with a less percentage of the popular vote than the ASP. Mohammed Shamte, leader of the ZPPP and a Pemban, was the Prime Minister of Zanzibar's first independent government formed on 10 December 1963, in coalition with the ZNP. For the ASP, the independence conferred by Britain was seen as 'Arab independence'. The ZNP/ZPPP government was to function for three months before its obliteration by the events known as the Zanzibar Revolution of 12 January 1964.

The so-called Zanzibar Revolution was a confused and murky affair. The actual seizure of power was undertaken by a hitherto unknown Ugandan by the name of John Okello who led a force of mainland Africans and ASP youth against the Sultan's government. With its rural bastion of Pemba Island far away, the Sultan's weakly defended government in the capital Zanzibar Town stood perilously exposed to a hostile Unguja countryside. It appears that the two principal opposition parties, the ASP of Abeid Karume and the *Umma* Party of Abdulrahman Babu, played no significant role. For a few days after the overthrow of the Sultan's government, many people, mainly lower-class Manga Arabs,[8] were killed in the Unguja countryside. Leaders of the 'revolution'

[8] A distinguished scholar argues that the Arabs were merely playing the anti-colonialist card to perpetuate their grip on Zanzibar (Lofchie 1965: 257). Yet both the ZNP of Zanzibar and the Muslim League of Eritrea were inspired by the Arab nationalism of Egyptian leader Gamal Abdel Nasser.

downplayed the number of those killed in the terror that followed, but it is commonly accepted that the death toll approximated 10,000, a very high percentage for a population of fewer than 300,000 at the time. By death, deportation, or departure the Arab population, which numbered 50,000 in 1963, fell between 12-15,000 people by the end of 1964 (Clayton 1981: 90, 99). The leaders of the ZNP/ZNNP government were either deported or imprisoned. The Sultan, fleeing with his coterie, was forever banned from Zanzibar and went into exile in the United Kingdom.

The pro-Unionist ASP justified the ethnic pogroms against Arabs and the indigenous Shirazi as the glorious overthrow of a slave holding feudal regime by an oppressed African majority. Scholars of Zanzibar, though more circumspect, side step the fact that a democratically elected government was overthrown; they also downplay the sheer scale of the killing, which for all intents and purposes was one-sided, much of it personal or criminal (Cameron 2004: 105). The violence of 1964 cowered and crushed the anti-union opposition anchored in the ZNP/ZPPP coalition. The subsequent Union, coupled with the post-revolutionary violence of the Karume years, buttressed the pro-union ASP against its domestic opponents, albeit in an increasingly uneasy relationship with the Tanzanian Union government. Zanzibari nationalism would not recover for over 30 years.

The Institutional and Legal Framework of the Federations

Pro-unionist parties in Eritrea and Zanzibar were the backbone of the alliances with Ethiopia and Tanganyika. The federal union mechanisms were also remarkably similar for Eritrea and Zanzibar. There was also a growing encroachment by the larger partner on the constitutionally guaranteed jurisdiction of the smaller partner. However, Zanzibar's stronger nationalist tradition, coupled with Julius Nyerere's more democratic political practice, established a workable union for its first decade. Nevertheless both Ethiopia and Tanzania sought to foreclose any option for either Eritrea or Zanzibar to constitutionally opt out of their federal unions.

United Nations Resolution 390-A(V) on 2 December 1950 provided a federal status to Eritrea, the result of superpower reluctance to concede independence. It was also the American government that came up with the compromise formula

[8] Representing dhow crews and petty traders, the standard of living of Manga Arabs was similar to that of the indigenous Zanzibaris. Because they lived in local communities, Manga Arabs often took the brunt of anti-Arab agitation (Clayton 1981: 19-20, 44, 67).

of federation during the General Assembly debates (Kinfe Abraham 1994: 141; Semere Haile 1988: 24).[9] The United States appreciated the strategic location of Eritrea. During WWII it had used Eritrea for the storage of supplies and for naval communications, as well as installing an aircraft assembly plant in Gura and a naval base at the port of Massawa (US gratitude was also cemented by Ethiopia's sending of a battalion of its soldiers to America's Korean War). The US was also using the communication facilities of Radio Marina in Asmara, which was subsequently followed by the establishment of 'Kagnew' base there: "It was no coincidence that the base which served US military and intelligence objectives came into being almost immediately after federation" (Kinfe Abraham 1994: 141). The US thus foreclosed the independence option to Eritrea, with federation with Ethiopia being the sole option. As we shall see in the case of Zanzibar, US pressure was to extinguish Zanzibar's nation-state status three months after its independence.

The federal arrangement initially envisioned a three-government structure. The Eritrean and Ethiopian government were to be responsible for their respective domestic jurisdictions in the legislative, executive and judicial spheres. And an overarching federal government was to have jurisdiction over both the Ethiopian and Eritrean governments. The federal jurisdiction included defence, foreign affairs, currency, finance, foreign and interstate commerce, and external and interstate communication including ports (Semere Haile 1988: 22). The jurisdiction of the Eritrean government was to extend to all matters not vested in the Federal government and included the power to maintain the internal police, to levy taxes, to meet the expenses of domestic functions, and to service and adopt its own budget. The participation of Eritreans in these three levels of government was vested in UN Resolution 390-A(V) and the Federal Act, as well as in the Eritrean Constitution of the time.[10] However, neither the Ethiopian government nor the UN Commissioner recognized an overarching federal government, preferring instead to devolve the federal powers on the Ethiopian government, which meant in effect a two-government system. The

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[9] Ironically a key US ally in the region, Israel, voted against federation in the UN General Assembly, perhaps as a tit-for-tat response for the fact that Ethiopia had voted against the 1948 UN resolution establishing the state of Israel. Israel later supported Ethiopian policy against what was conceived of as 'Arab' influenced Eritrean liberation movements seeking to make the Red Sea into an 'Arab Lake'. Discussion with Mr. Habtom Zerai, 26 May 2004.

[10] Paragraph 5 of the UN Resolution 390-A(V) and the Federal Act, and Article 7 of the Eritrean Constitution, stated that an Imperial Council composed of five Eritreans and five Ethiopians would meet annually to advise on common federal affairs. This Council was to be the sole liaison between the Eritrean government and Emperor Haile Sellassie (Semere Haile 1988: 23).

Commissioner also agreed that the Emperor should have a representative in Eritrea with the power to promulgate new legislation. This occurred despite the fact that U.N. Resolution 390-A(V) contained no reference to Haile Sellassie's regime having a representative in Eritrea. Compounding the constitutional inconsistencies was the absence of an essential principle of the federal idea, that is, equality among the component parts of a federation, along with the need for a neutral arbiter to resolve constitutional disputes (Bereket Habte Selassie 1989: 38). On 12 December 1952, the UN General Assembly overwhelmingly adopted the Commissioner's report, despite the fact there had yet to be specified the mechanism for implementation of the federal structures and its functions (Semere Haile 1988: 26).[11]

Ethiopian interference eventually undermined the federation (1952-1962), frustrating Eritrean aspirations for democratic self-rule and precipitating a political crisis (Kinfe Abraham 1994: 132, 136; Greenfield 1988). In the local elections in 1952, parties that favoured independence gained 55.2% of vote.. And after federation with Ethiopia, in the first elections for the Eritrean parliament, non-unionist parties won over 50% of the vote, though pro-independence parties controlled the legislature. These first elections, held in 1952, were also the last. The authoritarian Sellassie regime moved rapidly against Eritrean society. The Eritrean press came under federal control with strict censorship. The trade unions were also repressed, which, coupled with high urban unemployment, compelled thousands of Eritreans to migrate to Ethiopia and the Gulf states. By mid-1950s Eritrea was well on its way to becoming merely another province of Ethiopia. Even before reunification, the government was renamed "the Eritrean administration under Haile Sellassie," meaning that there was in effect no Eritrean government and therefore no special legislative, executive or judicial power except that of the Imperial Ethiopian government (Kinfe Abraham 1994: 137; Markakis 1987: 58). The Ethiopian flag replaced the Eritrean flag, and the Ethiopian legal code was introduced. On 9 May 1959, the Eritrean Assembly was pressured to vote to change the name "Eritrean Government" to the "Eritrean Administration," with the "Chief Executive" becoming "Chief of Administration" (Semere Haile 1988: 28). In September 1959, the Assembly further voted to replace the Eritrean Constitution and accept the Ethiopian penal code. Unionist leaders who were committed to self-rule were soon discarded and replaced by more pliable local politicians willing to

[11] Legally only the UN General Assembly could amend the Federal Act. Despite the violations of the UN Resolution, of the Federal Act and of the Eritrean constitution by the Ethiopian government, the UN and the US remained aloof and later, upon Ethiopian annexation, made no protest whatsoever (Semere Haile 1988: 27-28).

implement the Ethiopian regime's agenda in Eritrea. Tedla Bairu, the foremost unionist leader and first head of the Eritrean Government, was eased out of office in 1955 (Semere Haile 1988: 27; Markakis 1988: 54). On 13 November 1962, with Ethiopian soldiers surrounding the government building, Eritrean parliamentarians were said to have agreed to dissolve their assembly and accept outright Ethiopian annexation, although no vote was actually taken (Semere Haile 1988: 29). For many Muslims, their political disempowerment under Ethiopian rule catalysed the birth of a resistance movement in 1956 under the Eritrean Liberation Movement (ELM), to be subsequently followed by an armed front in 1961 known as the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) (Kinfe Abraham 1994: 132).

As the federation in the Horn became doomed, further south, another ill-fated federation loomed. Parallel to Eritrea during federation, the ASP/TANU coalition controlling the new Union government incorporated independent trade unions into the party-state on both the mainland and on the Isles. And especially on Zanzibar, the once vibrant free press was banned along with all opposition parties whose leaders languished in jail. The independent judiciary and legislature were closed down. Many Zanzibaris were deported to Oman, while others voluntarily left for the mainland or to the Gulf and the West. As noted earlier, the ASP regime's base of support in Zanzibar rested primarily on the African mainlander and indigenous peasantry on Unguja (with some support on Pemba), anchored by the Union. Yet approximately half the population had been politically disenfranchised through the banning of the ZNP/ZPPP coalition. Shortly after coming to power, moreover, Abeid Karume exclaimed that there would be no elections of any kind for at least 60 years! The ASP regime subsequently portrayed Karume as a great 'revolutionary,' perhaps a Zanzibari equivalent of Tedla Bairu leader of the pro-Ethiopian Unionist party. The CIA's role in the creation of the Union was replaced in favour of the pan-Africanist 'visions' of the founding fathers, none of whom hitherto had ever talked of such a union.[12]

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[12] Julius Nyerere's TANU had earlier talked of some kind of East African federation comprising Tanganyika, Uganda, and Kenya. But there had never been a political party programme prior to 1964 of only a union between Tanganyika and Zanzibar by either TANU or ASP (or *Umma*), let alone the ZNP and ZPPP. Nyerere, nonetheless, did have more than a passing interest in Zanzibari nationalist politics. Several times during 1956 he went to Zanzibar to try to persuade the opposing nationalist parties to merge (later unification talks achieved temporary success within PAFMECA/PAFMECSA). Zanzibaris of African mainland origin were strongly in favour of a merger, but Nyerere's proposal was coolly received among indigenous Zanzibari political leaders (Lofchie 1965:168-169). Turning to the role of the US, Babu cites as proof of collusion between Nyerere and the CIA a secret CIA Memorandum dated 5 February 1964: "The aura of Communist particularly Chinese involvement in the . . .. Zanzibar revolt, together with the knowledge of

Thus after approximately 100 days, Zanzibar and Tanganyika created one state, Tanzania. As in the Ethiopia-Eritrea federal formula, the Tanganyika-Zanzibar federal structure initially envisioned three governments. However in practice, again like in the Ethiopia-Eritrea outcome, there were only two governments: the Federal and Tanganyika governments being merged into one government, with Zanzibar comprising the second government. The 1964 Articles of Union classified the Union's powers as follows: government of the United Republic; external affairs, defence, police, emergency powers, citizenship, immigration, external trade and borrowing, the public service of the United Republic, income tax, corporation tax, customs and excise duties, harbours, civil aviation and telegraph (Articles of Union in Lofchie 1965: 285-287; Shivji 1990: 21-22). Areas such as health, primary and secondary education, agriculture, co-operatives, and any other residual powers were the constitutional prerogatives of Zanzibar. These constitutional divisions of power were similar to the Ethiopia-Eritrea Federation. However, it was the manner of establishing the popular legitimacy of these federations that key differences stand out between Eritrea and Zanzibar: there was an election in Eritrea and not even a referendum in Zanzibar (only an agreement between the government of Tanganyika and some members of Zanzibar's Revolutionary Council (ZRC)). Offsetting this absence of a popular mandate, and assuaging Zanzibari fears of outright annexation, was the constitutional provision in the 1964 Articles of Union that allocated the posts of President and Vice-President between the mainland and the Isles. This constitutional provision meant that in 1964 Abeid Karume became the Vice-President while Julius Nyerere became President of the United Republic of Tanzania.

After the Union with Tanganyika, the pattern of Zanzibari national politics during the first twenty-five years of the ASP/CCM (*Chama cha Mapinduzi*, Party of the Revolution in English, formed in 1977 from the merger of TANU and ASP)[13] regime must be understood as an intra-party struggle, first with the Left in the 1960s, and then with the Right in the 1980s, neither faction on either side of the Karume regime being enthusiastic about the Union. Space does not permit a detailed examination of Zanzibari politics. It is necessary to stress

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growing communist activity in their own countries, have worried such leaders as Kenyatta, Nyerere and Obote of Uganda . . . and has aroused the governments to some apprehension over the dangers of communist subversion" (in Babu 2002: 168). It is now commonly accepted that this collusion with the CIA was indeed the case.

[13] Henceforth I refer to the ASP as 'CCM Zanzibar' and TANU as 'CCM Dodoma' (Dodoma is the present-day capital city of the United Republic of Tanzania. In the mid-1970s, plans were made to move the capital city to Dodoma. Tanzania's National Assembly moved there in 1996, but many government offices remain in the original national capital, Dar es Salaam).

however that unlike in feudal Ethiopia where national governmental structures were few and ineffective, and with no political party structure to speak of, the Tanganyika Union/British Westminster institutions (National Parliament), and mass party organs of TANU, allowed a channel for cooption rather than outright repression of Zanzibari nationalist leaders. In fact, the socialist Arusha Declaration of 1967, three years into the Union, may have been an attempt by Nyerere to steer a middle course between non-radicals and radicals, including Marxist Zanzibari leaders inside TANU itself.

Perhaps the more important factor in staving off outright annexation of Zanzibar by Tanganyika was the ways in which Karume strengthened military and economic cooperation with the Eastern Bloc. Karume had dismantled an American military station (installed during the British colonial period), and instead forged development cooperation with East Germany and China. This served as a counter-balance to the more moderate and pro-Western TANU government. Thus roughly a decade into the Tanzania Union, equivalent to the institutional life span of the Ethiopia-Eritrea Federation, Zanzibari autonomy remained intact, a reflection of the staying power of Zanzibari nationalism as well as Karume's skilful balancing act between union and Zanzibari domestic forces.[14] This adroit strategy, however, was to prove ephemeral after Karume's assassination in 1972.[15]

Growing constitutional encroachment on Zanzibar's autonomy becomes evident after the merger of the TANU (Tanganyika) and ASP (Zanzibar) political parties in 1977. In the wake of the power vacuum on the Isles after Karume's death and the succession to the Zanzibar presidency of the weaker ASP leader Aboud Jumbe, Julius Nyerere's TANU moved to further integrate mainland and Isles political structures. This effort culminated in the controversial constitutional changes of 1977, which centred on the supremacy of the new political party, CCM. In the section below I have synthesized complex constitutional questions for the sake of brevity and clarity into the following sections: (i) the constitutional supremacy of CCM; (ii) the additional powers ceded to the Union; (iii)

[14] With Karume's balancing act vis-à-vis Julius Nyerere and his former ZNP/ZPPP Zanzibari opponents in mind, one may glean another parallel from the federation period: that pro-Union Eritrean politicians may have seen Ethiopian backing, while opposing outright Ethiopian annexation, as a way to keep the Independence Bloc out of power (i.e. the Muslim League) in order to retain control over the federal Eritrean state.

[15] Abdulrahman Babu almost faced Zanzibar's kangaroo court system of the 1970s in the wake of Abeid Karume's assassination. To cite one legal contradiction, the Attorney General was both prosecutor and defendant of Babu! Fortunately for Babu, Nyerere refused to hand him over to the Zanzibar authorities, fearing a similar fate to that of two other Zanzibari Union leaders,

constitutional reform within Zanzibar; and (iv) the Zanzibari nationalist response to these above processes.

First, with the creation of CCM from the merger of TANU and ASP, CCM, became a union organ. This was in order to create a constitutionally supreme party for the Union government since TANU and ASP had only ruled in Tanzania mainland and in Zanzibar, respectively. But if CCM became superior to the union governmental structures then this would potentially mean that CCM had authority over non-union matters (McHenry 1994: 196). Critiquing CCM on this move, Shivji argues that the 1977 Constitution sought, undemocratically through closed sessions of the National Executive Committee (NEC), and without any other fora for debate, to impose mainland party supremacy over the 1964 Articles of Union. In Shivji's view, the 1964 Articles of Union could not be amended given that this pact is between two peoples and two sovereign states; nor in fact did the 1964 Articles of Union ever mention a political party (Shivji 1990: 56-68).

Second, in addition to the powers ceded in the original 1964 Articles of Union, the 1977 Constitution unilaterally ceded authority over currency, banks, and foreign exchange (1965); industrial licensing and statistics, higher education, and matters related to the Treaty for East African Cooperation (1967); oil, petroleum, and natural gas (1968); the National Examination Council of Tanzania (1977); and the Court of Appeal of the Union Republic (1984). Areas such as agriculture and health remained under Zanzibar's jurisdiction.

Turning to constitutional reform within Zanzibar, there occurred democratic reforms of the Isles' single party system in the wake of the 1977 union constitutional reforms. For the first time since 1964 the 1979 Zanzibar Constitution gave Zanzibaris the right to directly elect their president within the CCM single party system in 1980. The 1979 Zanzibar Constitution also established the Zanzibar legislature, the House of Representatives (HRP) — the legislative body having been abolished in 1964 and replaced by the Zanzibar Revolutionary Council, which hitherto had performed this function.[16] These constitutional provisions in Zanzibar represented an effort to democratise the

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Othman Sharif and Kassim Hanga, both of whom Karume had executed in 1969. Instead, Nyerere detained Babu, who, though never convicted, languished in mainland jails for a number of years before going into exile in the West where he become a severe critic of CCM. Babu and his partner Amrit Wilson would become committed supporters of the Eritrean Revolution (Babu 2002: 231-238).

[16] For an in-depth treatment of constitutional and party reform during this period, see H. Othman and A. Mlimuka (1990: 58, 169).

single party system on the Isles in tandem with the system on the mainland. Representing a real democratic advance for the Isles, Aboud Jumbe, a pro-unionist ASP leader at the time, was seeking to undercut the hard line ASP factions as well as give relief to Zanzibaris weary of over a decade of Karume's autocratic rule. Unintentionally, these reforms to the Zanzibari executive and legislature laid the basis for the constitutional challenge mounted by Zanzibari nationalist forces during the multiparty period in the 1990s. In regard to Zanzibari participation in the Union structures, electoral mechanisms were established for electing Zanzibari Members of Parliament to the National Assembly in Dodoma. Though representing a democratic impulse on the Isles, these reforms must be seen in the wider trend of constitutional erosion, for the real power remained with the newfound 'supremacy' of the CCM Party bureaucracy and its ossified 'socialism.'

Finally, there emerged a growing political perception that Zanzibar was slowly being 'swallowed' by the Dodoma Union government, due in great part to mainlander dominance in the ranks of CCM, as well as to the curtailment of Zanzibar's relative autonomy in foreign affairs. Not surprisingly, the creation of CCM as a constitutionally supreme party, and its encroachment upon Zanzibar's constitutional jurisdiction as outlined in the 1964 Articles of Union, caused a nationalist reaction in Zanzibar. As union authorities began denying that the Union was a federal system, Zanzibari leaders responded with demands for formal guarantees that Zanzibar would not be administratively transformed into another region as had Eritrea, reflecting a growing concern over the direction in which the Union was heading.[17] Such moves by CCM were legally dubious, however. Shivji, for one, infers from the fact that the 1964 Articles of Union had provisions for two Vice-Presidents, one meant for a Tanganyika government and the other for the Zanzibar government, that the original intent was thus for a three-government federal structure rather than two (Shivji 1990: 27-28). Other scholars, however, point to the two-government system actually established in 1964, to argue that the system was more like a unitary state (McHenry 1994: 195).

Compounding the political anxieties of Zanzibaris was CCM Dodoma's intolerance of factions within CCM Zanzibar (former ASP) over constitutional affairs, as the fall of the Zanzibar President Aboud Jumbe clearly demonstrated.

[17] A further widening of the Union presence on Zanzibar came through CCM's mainland mass organizations of Youth (*Vijana*), Co-operatives (*Washirika*), Workers (*Juwata*), and Women (UWT), which invariably competed with Zanzibari ministries. These mainland mass organizations also facilitated cadre campaigns in an effort to politically strengthen CCM in the countryside against rising nationalist opposition.

In January 1984, the CCM Dodoma leadership, chaired by President Nyerere, held a special session in Dodoma to discuss the 'polluted political atmosphere' in Zanzibar. The controversy led to Jumbe's resignation from the Zanzibar Presidency. The crux of the crisis was Jumbe's attempt to reconcile popular discontent on the Isles over Zanzibar's constitutional status within the Union. Jumbe's purge from power further fuelled nationalist sentiment, which in turn led to the subsequent removal of the Zanzibar Chief Minister, Seif Sheriff Hamad, in 1988, jailed for two years on trumped up charges at the dusk of the single party period. Hamad would later lead the formal multiparty opposition to CCM Zanzibar in the 1990s.

To sum up, among many Zanzibaris there was both tension and ambivalence regarding the creation of the CCM: many welcomed Union institutions (and perhaps a faith in Julius Nyerere's democratic credentials at that time) to curb ASP excesses; yet later came to fear that Tanzania mainland would gradually erode Zanzibar's autonomy.[18]

Regional African Powers and the Federal Unions

In the trend towards authoritarianism it is important to make mention of the political cooperation between the Ethiopian and Tanganyikan regimes, both outside and within the now-defunct OAU. Turning first to inter-state relations in the region, political challenges to Ethiopian suppression of self-determination for Eritrea and the Ogaden were pre-empted by quid pro quo arrangements with East African countries like Kenya and Tanzania (Ruth Iyob 1995: 56). A cooperation treaty was signed by a Kenyan government feeling threatened by Somali claims on the Northern Frontier Region. In the case of Tanzania, Nyerere was pulled towards Ethiopia by what Iyob vaguely termed as Ethiopia's 'timely assistance' to Nyerere's regime during the military uprisings of 1964 (Ruth Iyob 1995: 56), though it was the British and Nigerians who actually provided the military and police forces, respectively.[19] The military uprisings were in part triggered by the Zanzibar Revolution (based on grievances around

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[18] Anti-ASP feelings intensified in wake of the 1972 famine due in good measure to drastic cuts in food imports and a form of forced-*Ujamaa* collectivisation in the Swahili countryside, perhaps akin to the Derg's rural collectivisation. However despite such excesses by the ASP leadership, many Zanzibaris, including on politically marginalized Pemba, by the 1990s, had come to see the populist autocrat Karume as a staunch defender of Zanzibar autonomy against Julius Nyerere.

[19] Professor Richard Greenfield, personal communication: 16 October 2004.

Africanization of the civil service), which Nyerere may have seen as a threat to his position on the mainland.

Within the OAU, the Ethiopian regime silenced criticism over its non-democratic nature by successfully lobbying for a Heads of State and Government resolution on the sanctity of colonial borders. This resolution was passed at the Cairo OAU Summit in July 1964, and despite its inapplicability to the Eritrean case, was later used to legitimate Ethiopian control of it. Linking this to the Zanzibar question, the OAU Resolution would have also bolstered the TANU regime vis-à-vis Zanzibar in any future constitutional conflict. Babu himself notes that the OAU took a hands-off approach towards the Eritrean question at the 1964 OAU Summit in Cairo (in which he participated as a member of the Tanzanian delegation). President Nyerere, at the head of the Tanzania delegation, proposed a resolution that the OAU pledge themselves to respect the borders existing on the achievement of national independence (Babu 1988: 48).[20] Though the OAU accepted the Cairo Resolution (the English version can be found in McEwen 1971: 22), the resolution contrary to the wishes of the Ethiopian government did not become a part of its Charter. Pateman, noting the myopic view of the OAU regarding the right to self-determination because it would supposedly undermine pan-African unity, cites Nyerere's support to Biafra to secede from Nigeria during their civil war of 1967-1970 and how there is no evidence that this stance caused Nyerere to lose any of the immense prestige he had earned in Africa and the rest of the world; nor did it lead to calls for secession from nationalities on the mainland of Tanzania or demands from "the island of Zanzibar for the right to secede from Tanzania" (Pateman 1990: 11). Nyerere's motives for supporting secession in Nigeria apart, but not anti-colonial self-determination in Eritrea, there had remained an uneasy tension within Zanzibar right from the beginning of the 1964 Union that Pateman misses. More to the point, the principle of self-determination for both Eritrea and Zanzibar was sacrificed on the altars of both inter-African and global power politics.

During this period there was a tendency among an earlier generation of established scholars to obfuscate the debates on Eritrea and Zanzibar. For instance, Christopher Clapham, a pro-Ethiopian 'centralist' scholar, portrayed the Ethiopian-Eritrean conflict as the result of core-periphery tension. Clapham, according to one scholar, provided no detailed analysis of this 'periphery' and, like others, ignored the secular basis of Eritrean nationalism (Ruth Iyob 1995:

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[20] Babu himself in this 1988 article makes no reference to his home country of Zanzibar where parallel processes were playing themselves out. Salim Ahmed Salim, a pro-Unionist Zanzibari born on Pemba, served as Secretary General of the OAU in its final years.

12-15). Turning to Tanzania, perhaps it was not so much 'Greater Tanganyikanism' as it was 'Nyererism'. For instance, a long respected scholar on Tanzania, Dean McHenry, characterized Zanzibar's political agitation against the CCM Union as a 'sub-nationalism' and a potential threat to the building of *Ujamaa* socialism; and that federal structures had given Zanzibar a constitutional base that distinguished it from other sub-nationalisms (these other contexts he leaves unspecified though he might have had Eritrea in mind). He attributed pan-African motives and the historical ties among Bantu-speaking peoples as the motive for Nyerere joining Zanzibar to Tanganyika in the wake of failed efforts at federation with Kenya and Uganda (McHenry 1994: 189-213).[21] McHenry, furthermore, argues that Zanzibari 'subnationalism' tended to be unprincipled and based on power politics; that factions merely employed the 'sub-nationalist card' for positioning in the Union political establishment. Certainly this explained Zanzibari political elite behaviour to some extent, but McHenry surely downplays Zanzibari nationalism as a social movement and political force.

The Political Sociology of Authoritarian Federalism

Eritrea's national liberation movements slowly gained ground in the wake of the unilateral abrogation of the Federation by the Sellassie regime in 1962. The post-federation years are beyond the focus of this paper. Suffice it to say that for Eritrea the collapse of the feudal regime in 1974 saw the rise of the Derg and the continuation of the liberation war for another seventeen years before the eventual victory of the Eritrean Revolution in 1991, just as the Cold War dissipated. The Tanzania Union, on the other hand, survived the demise of the Cold War and the collapse of *Ujamaa*, institutionally enduring into the contemporary era of multiparty politics, 'globalization', and Post-Cold War geopolitics.

The Union President Ali Hassan Mwinyi, a Zanzibari and Julius Nyerere's successor, presided over sweeping anti-*Ujamaa* pro-market changes (1985-1995). Mwinyi, moreover, is widely perceived to have gone some way to redressing religious imbalance by promoting Muslims in the government. During this early period of economic liberalization, burgeoning patrimonial networks emerged within Tanzania, underwritten by IMF/World Bank Structural Adjustment Programmes. Economic liberalization on the Isles may in fact have

[21] Perhaps it is true to say that a regional East African-cum-pan-African vision encompassing Kenya and Uganda may have prevented Nyerere from outright swallowing Zanzibar. Pan-Africanism and historical ties (perhaps similar to the Bantu 'unity' rhetoric of TANU and ASP) were also another legitimising exercise used for foreign consumption by successive Ethiopian regimes against Eritrea (e.g. Christian Tigrinya 'unity').

bolstered the determination of some CCM Zanzibar leaders to preserve the status quo of the Union in order to tap income earning networks, both legal and non-legal, through exploiting the complex inter-governmental regulations surrounding economic investment on the Isles.

Julius Nyerere continued to wield enormous power from his position as Chairman of CCM (to 1990), and later as Father of the Nation, ensuring that the Union would undergo no fundamental reform. A case in point was the controversy that erupted when Zanzibar in the early 1990s tried to join the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), the initiative being ruled as unconstitutional by the Union government because a non-sovereign entity (i.e. Zanzibar) could not join such a body. The OIC debacle was an example of the growing estrangement between Zanzibar and Tanzania Mainland. Subsequently the 'G55,' a group of Mainland Christian parliamentarians agitating for constitutional reform to limit Zanzibar's perceived privileges within the Union, advocated in favour of a revived Tanganyika government (i.e. three government system).[22] Ostensibly a constitutional issue, there may have been religious motives for the emergence of the 'G55' who were mainland Christian political leaders. Julius Nyerere quashed the motion in the Dodoma National Assembly. Thus in contrast to the Karume period, when Zanzibar maintained a close relationship with the Eastern Bloc as a counterweight to Nyerere's TANU, the 1990s saw CCM Dodoma block CCM Zanzibar's overtures to the Islamic Bloc, a point not lost on Zanzibari nationalists.

The purges in CCM Zanzibar during the twilight of the single party era ensured that the Zanzibar nationalist movement would pursue its political programme outside of the monolithic CCM.[23] With the advent of multiparty politics, Zanzibari nationalism found its institutional expression in the Civic United Front (CUF), formed in 1992. CUF represented a broad alliance of urban intellectual and business interests, and the vast majority of rural peasantry on the second island of Pemba, as well as growing rural support on the main island of Unguja.

Throughout the two multiparty elections in (1995 and 2000) CUF advocated a

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[22] Such perceived privileges included social services like electricity, as well as the Union budget for areas like defence, which are heavily subsidized by Tanzania Mainland. In recent years the Union government has even met the budgetary deficit of the Zanzibar government (McHenry 1994: 198).

[23] During 1980s Eritrean and Zanzibari nationalists called for independence referenda, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) from a position of military advantage, and the clandestine Zanzibar opposition from a position of political weakness.

three government federal structure: a government of Zanzibar, a Tanganyika government, and an over-arching Union government based on the original 1964 Articles of Union, such as defence and immigration.[24] CUF said it had no intention to break the Union, but only to renegotiate the 12 issues that were added to the Union's prerogatives unilaterally in 1977. CUF feared that, otherwise, Zanzibar would become another region like Mafia Island.[25] CUF also accused the Union government of coveting hidden offshore oil reserves, one of the items constitutionally added to the Union government in 1977. Zanzibar's limited economic base – tourism, cloves, and the Zanzibar port – contrasted unfavourably with Tanganyika's huge and comparatively resource-endowed land mass. Thus for many Zanzibaris there was a perception, like that of many Eritreans during the federation, that the larger political entity sought to economically exploit the weaker partner.

CCM said the policy would remain that of two governments and that the disproportionate number of Zanzibar seats, a consequence of constitutional compromise, was here to stay.[26] CCM cited the European Union as an example of how people remained strong through unity, and the economic benefits of continued union with the mainland were analogised to this. CCM argued that a federal system as proposed by CUF would break the Union, 'something that will never be allowed to happen' said President Mkapa, hinting at the expulsions of mainland-based Zanzibaris back to the Isles if the two-government union collapsed.[27] Pro-unionist Zanzibaris also made this threat.

Currently the political terrain around the Zanzibar question remains uncertain. On the positive side, CUF has made significant legislative inroads on the back of the 1995 and 2000 General Elections, being the official opposition in both the Dodoma Union Parliament and the Zanzibar House of Representatives. And

[24] The three-government proposal stemmed from the recommendations of the Nyalali Commission--a presidential commission appointed in 1993--which CCM rejected as a threat to its staus quo Union arrangement. Significantly, the Tanzania mainland opposition parties endorsed Nyalali's recommendation for a three-government structure.

[25] In the 1995 campaign CUF claimed that prior to Zanzibar's independence Julius Nyerere wanted to broker a deal with the British whereby Tanganyika could absorb Zanzibar, as mainland Kenya had absorbed Zanzibar's coastal strip prior to Tanganyika's independence.

[26] Zanzibar MPs in the Dodoma Union Parliament have a large number of seats relative to Zanzibar's population. The average Zanzibar MP may represent no more than 5-10,000 constituents, while his/her mainland counterpart may represent 20-40,000 citizens. Zanzibar's allocated number of elected MPs in the Dodoma National Assembly stands at 50.

[27] Potentially, this could share some parallels with the actual deportation of thousands of Eritreans from Ethiopia during the Border War, with serious legal and human rights consequences for political reconciliation (see Gaim Kibreab 1999).

CCM's tradition of rotating Presidents/Vice-Presidents among mainlander and Zanzibari leaders is working thus far, though it will be interesting to see who succeeds Benjamin Mkapa for CCM Union Presidential candidate for the 2005 elections (by tradition now the turn of a Zanzibari). Yet there are problems lurking as well. Presently, a post-2000 election accord appears to be on shaky grounds with CCM foot dragging on electoral reform (Hamad 2004: pp. 5-7).[28] Furthermore, and regardless of these legislative footholds, another electoral debacle in the 2005 General Elections, and the blocking by the CCM regime of a third CUF victory on the Isles, could lead to a rapidly escalating crisis if Zanzibaris feel they are unable to change their executive President constitutionally.[29]

Conclusion

Both Eritrea and Zanzibar were constitutionally incorporated into federal unions that were authoritarian in practice, especially towards power sharing among key nationalities and regions, and which left no constitutional space for the renegotiation of the federal structures themselves.[30] Yet these two cases surely demonstrate if nothing else the political bankruptcy of top-down pan-Africanism: the failures of nation building in Ethiopia and Tanzania catalysed the emergence of popular nationalisms as reactions to hegemonic federalisms.

Zanzibar's international status was not as bleak as that of Eritrea's during and after the Federation period when Eritrea underwent extreme isolation from the international community throughout its liberation struggle. It may in fact be that with the independence of Eritrea, a precedent has been set in breaking the 'taboo' on smaller African nations pursuing self-determination, should Zanzibar wish to follow such a path.[31] Undoubtedly, the CCM regime, in order to garner support from the American government, may resist the Zanzibari nationalist

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[28] An example being the establishment of a credible Register of Voters.

[29] Many Zanzibaris maintain that the 1964 Articles of Union allowed Zanzibar its own flag. CCM Zanzibar (former ASP), attempting to placate nationalist sentiment, has itself just proposed a flag for Zanzibar.

[30] Julius Nyerere finally visited Eritrea in 1997, giving a talk at the Asmara Municipality Hall on South-South Cooperation (*Eritrea Profile* 29 March 1997). The talk was followed by a short but lively question and answer period, which by some accounts included Nyerere's admission that he had too uncritically supported Ethiopia. Julius Nyerere most likely did not mention Zanzibar while visiting Eritrea given that the time of talk would have been the post-1995 General Election when CCM Zanzibar had been returned to power under dubious circumstances.

[31] Zanzibar is also a member of a UN body representing nations without statehood known as the *Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO)*.

movement by seeking to conflate anti-CCM sentiment on the Isles with political propaganda that seeks to paint CUF as 'fundamentalist' and connected to the Middle East. Yet Zanzibari nationalism, like the Eritrean movement before it, must first and foremost be understood on its own terms rather than as appendages of outside powers.

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